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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

CANCELLATION OF SPECIAL MISSION--Habib Chatti, secretary general of the Islamic Conference Organization, today confirmed the postponement of the special mission connected with Jerusalem and the Middle East question which was to be undertaken in Europe by King Hassan II of Morocco and President of Bangladesh Zisur Rahman. Chatti, who is presiding over a seminar on Islam in the UNESCO building in Paris, explained that King Hassan informed him through the Moroccan ambassador in Paris of the postponement. The two heads of state were due to meet President Giscard d'Estaing on Monday, British Prime Minister Mrs Thatcher in London on Tuesday and then travel to Bonn. [Text] [LDO62056 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 6 Dec 80]

SAHARAN ATTACKS IN MOROCCO--The Saharan Information Ministry said in a communique issued today that the Saharan fighters launched violent offensives on 10 and 11 December on enemy positions in (Ras Khafra) in the south of Morocco. As a result, 130 Moroccan soldiers were killed and a similar number wounded, and a vast quantity of arms and ammunition seized, including 39 military vehicles and 2 guns. [Summary from poor reception] [LD142146 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 14 Dec 80]

SAHARAN VICTORY OVER MOROCCANS--A Saharan source stated yesterday that the Saharan People's Liberation Army has exterminated a Moroccan force consisting of three units, one paratroop unit and two commando units near Abatih along the Moroccan-Saharan border. The same source pointed out that the fierce battles which started on 8 December at 1400 ended on 9 December at noon. In this daring attack the Moroccan forces suffered losses in men and equipment as follows: 123 soldiers killed and the same number wounded; 60 heavy and light vehicles of various types destroyed, including 1 tank and 1 Landrover; 17 105-mm, 122-mm and 106-mm guns; 12 23-mm, 14.5-mm, and 12.7-mm machine guns destroyed, along with 10 mortars. [Text] [LD120830 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 12 Dec 80]

SUDAN-MOROCCO INFORMATION AGREEMENTS--Rabat, 12 Oct (SUNA)--Sudan and Morocco concluded today two agreements on information and cooperation between the two national news agencies. Visiting Sudanese minister of culture and information, Dr Ismai'l al-Haj Musa, signed the agreements with his Moroccan counterpart.
[Text] [Khartoum SUNA in English 1707 GMT 12 Oct 80 LD]

ATTACK ON SOUTHERN MOROCCO--Rabat, 15 Dec (MAP)--On 12 December at 0830, the enemy, coming from the west and estimated at three ailaks reinforced by a katiba of staline orgues [as received] with 40 launchers, attacked the support points deployed south of Sken el am Amra (southern Morocco) that they submitted to intensive harrassing fire. In the face of energetic and immediate riposte of support points and the decisive action of the artillery, the enemy concentrated its effort on other support points but without success. Right from the beginning of the attack, intervention groups operating in the Abbadi region (southern Morocco) were sent in reinforcement. The rapidity of the intervention surprised the enemy which was obliged to withdraw towards the west and the south under fire from the air force which, in spite of bad weather conditions, made many raids and destroyed many vehicles. Heavy losses were inflicted on the mercenaries who left 130 dead and 40 vehicles, some of which intact including an AB 11 anti-tank gun carrier. On the side of the Royal Armed Forces, 8 shouhada and 50 wounded are deplored.
[Text] [LD151340 Rabat MAP in English 1217 GMT 15 Dec 80]

CSO: 4420

AFGHANISTAN

FORMER KABUL EDITOR DESCRIBES AFGHAN SITUATION

BK171440 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 9 Dec 80 p 6

[Editorial: "Afghanistan Becomes a Soviet Quagmire" by Afzal Nasiri. Paper provides the following description of Nasiri: "Afzal Nasiri, a senior assistant editor of KABUL NEW TIMES, was forced to leave Afghanistan with his wife and child."]

[Excerpts] A reign of violence and oppression continues in Afghanistan with no sign of freedom for the afflicted nation. Hundreds of thousands of Afghans forced out of their country live hard pressed in make-shift camps in Pakistan, looking forward to return home once the Russian forces are withdrawn and a nationalist government is installed.

The bloody situation which started after the April 1978 coup and was perpetuated by the Russians through Karmal and his henchmen has deprived Afghanistan and its people of their basic rights. Though Russian presence is in bulk and their might is unquestioned; yet they are far short of controlling the country. There is no respite whatsoever for them. Hide and seek with pro-Islamic guerrillas is a regular feature.

The situation remains volatile, notwithstanding the advent of winter. In Kabul itself if the day is quiet the night sees fireworks in one part of the capital or the other.

Only individuals like Ghulam Safdar-Shah, former supreme court judge of Pakistan can report that "life in the streets in Jalalabad and Kabul during the day hours is absolutely normal, bazar is full of activity, the shops are loaded with many types of goods and people go about their normal duties." Kabul made good propaganda of Safdar Shah's remarks which he made during a press conference there on the way to London, where his family lives. Mr Shah had saved his neck from Pakistan and had to satisfy the ruling Kabul junta for safe conduct.

A fresh arrival from Kabul reveals that political murders are common nowadays. The internal party feud (Khalq and Parcham) is on the increase. Both the factions remain far apart. Mujahideen activity in the city is limited to isolated incidents of terrorising the People's Democratic Party (Afghan Communist Party) members.

An eyewitness account is that on 24 November 1980 two persons were killed near Kabul municipality. The murderer made no attempt to escape. Later he was whisked away in a police jeep. For Kabul radio and newspapers reporting on such incidents is taboo.

Summing up the situation it is one of brutal repression and grim. Bombing of villages, destruction of crops, killing of innocents, forced entry into houses without any legal documents, forcibly lifting of young boys to induct in the army is the order of the day. This is in full cry and in more brutal form in the countryside. Stories of young men picked up from public baths (hamams) for military enrollment are very common.

On the economic front government revenues have plummeted and Karmal banks rely heavily on the Soviet Union even for basic commodities; the country is fully mortgaged to Russians. Kabul markets are now full of Soviet goods.

Recently a very encouraging statement came from the West German chancellor, Helmut Schmidt. While speaking before the German Bundestag (parliament) on 24 November and touching on Afghanistan in the light of Franco-German declaration of 5 February 1980, he said that "that detente would not survive another blow of the same kind. We therefore condemn, along with the overwhelming majority of the international community, the continuing armed intervention by the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and call for the unconditional and total withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan."

Similarly in one of the toughest U.S. statements on Afghanistan so far, U.S. representative Dante B. Fascell told the delegates to the 35-nation European Security Conference in Madrid in the last week of November that the Soviet Union was carrying out a reign of violence and oppression in Afghanistan and claimed nearly 10 percent of the Afghan population had fled the country to avoid the Soviet army of occupation.

Such statements are morale boosters to those working and fighting for the independence of Afghanistan. But for how long can the war of independence be prolonged with captured Russian arms. These have to be supplemented to keep the movement alive and this is what the resistance needs today.

CSO: 4920

ALGERIA

BRIEFS

PONOMAREV MEETING WITH ENVOY--Yesterday in Moscow Brother al-'Ayyashi Yakir, the Algerian ambassador to the Soviet Union, met with Boris Ponomarev, candidate member of the Politburo and secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. The meeting dealt with the achievements of the two countries' parties, the development of Algerian-Soviet cooperation and current international issues. [Text] [LD062146 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 6 Dec 80]

CSO: 4402

SPLIT IN MAIN GOVERNMENT PARTY REPORTED

LD151143 Paris LE MONDE in French 7-8 Dec 80 p 4

[Dispatch by Roland Delcour: "Morocco--Deputies Opposed to Mr Osman Could Form a New Party"]

[Text] Rabat--The division of the National Rally of Independence (RNI), the main government party, was further aggravated on Tuesday, 2 December. In fact, the RNI parliamentary group split into two parts after the adversaries of party chairman Osman, numbering 60 out of a total of 162, officially lodged the statutes of a new group--"Independent Democrats"--which they had formed then and there.

For the time being, the Independent Democrats, who are to oppose Liberal Independents loyal to Mr Osman, have not yet become a real political party. However, the next stage should logically witness the formation of a new organization. The new group's chairman is none other than Abdelhamid Kassimi, Chairman Osman's declared adversary. The situation has become so impossible for Mr Osman that the RNI chairman was received by King Hassan II, whose departure for Paris has apparently been postponed until next Saturday, on Wednesday, 3 December.

People loyal to Mr Osman have been complaining about the role played by the administration which, they assert, has encouraged the existing division quite openly instead of trying to head it and has allegedly been rather supporting the dissidents. Interior Minister Basri was mentioned last June--when a rebellion within the party broke out--as one of the ministers whose attitude was not at all favorable to Mr Osman.

Be that as it may, some RNI ministers are Mr Osman's declared enemies, especially Hanna Oulder Rachid, secretary of state in charge of Saharan affairs, Labor Minister Arsalan el Jadidi and Moussa Saadi, minister of energy and mines. Moulay Ahmed Alaoui, minister of state for tourism and a man close to the king, has so far failed to adopt a clear-cut attitude and is rather prone to dismiss both sides nonsuited. Finance Minister Reghayé is the man best known among the supporters of Osman, a member of the upper middle class, a liberal, the king's brother-in-law, former director of the king's office and former prime minister.

The man who is still party chairman asserts that these "rebels" have neither any arguments to put forward nor even any political motivation but only ambitions and personal grudges often supported from the outside, that is, by the administration. According to Mr Osman, these maneuvers can only weaken the main government party.

Matters have reached a point where some clarification is perhaps called for which would force both Mr Osman's supporters and his adversaries to at last submit their program and political objectives to Moroccan public opinion. This is why many observers have been talking increasingly frequently about the possibility of new elections next summer.

Especially since relations between the authorities and the socialist opposition are deteriorating and the tone of exchanges between the government and the Socialist Union of People's Forces [USFP] (Socialist Party) has been rising.

The phenomenon is not new since as early as the beginning of November criticisms by the socialist press of the king's overtures to Algeria and rumors about negotiations gave rise to a very sharp response by Moulay Ahmed Alaoui, minister of tourism and LE MATIN Du Sahara editorialist, under the headline "A Poisonous and Demoralizing Press." Moulay Ahmed Alaoui accused the socialist press of mentioning a de facto devaluation of the dirham and concluded: "Such written allegations in wartime could undermine the nation's morale and play into the enemy's hands."

After the socialist newspaper AL MOUHARRIR announced on 15 November that the Bank of Morocco has made a 1.5 billion dirham advance to the treasury and accused the government of printing money to pay for its debts and pay civil servants their wages for the second half of 1980, the government retorted by stating that this was a normal operation which had been the subject of a decree with this end in view and it had, in fact, taken the precaution of modifying by a decree issued on 25 October the constitution of the Bank of Morocco in such a manner that it did not need to ask parliament for approval. The finance minister has asserted that the advance in question would be used exclusively for financing equipment expenditures.

Going over to the offensive, Mr Ben Messaoud, the new spokesman for the Parliamentary Group of Independents (the government party) criticized the socialist opposition for betraying a parliamentary secret. As for Moulay Ahmed Alaoui, he again accused the socialist opposition of "mounting a groundless attack against the government and pursuing a systematic campaign of falsification and deception."

The socialist opposition has thus been openly accused of trying to destabilize the regime whereas ever since the 1977 elections it has continually been showing its commitment to the national consensus with respect to the return of the former Spanish Sahara to Morocco. However, everything seems to indicate that despite all its efforts the socialist opposition has remained suspect. In any case, the accusations directed against the USFP have confirmed that, contrary to rumors heard at the end of September, there has never been serious consideration of associating the socialists with the government.

CSO: 4400

MINISTER REPORTS ON OUTCOME OF AMMAN SUMMIT

LD091523 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 6-12 Dec 80 p 17

[Interview granted by Moroccan Minister of State in Charge of Foreign Affairs and Cooperations M'hamed Boucetta to AL-MAJALLAH correspondent in Amman--date not given]

[Excerpts] [Question] How do you evaluate the post-Amman Summit stage? Does Morocco intend to take an initiative to restore unity in the Arab fold?

[Answer] In fact we were very sorry that some of the Arab countries did not attend the 11th summit, particularly since these included states directly confronting Israel such as the PLO which, of course, must play its role in full with regard to liberating Palestine and securing the Palestinian people's rights. In any case the conference confirmed the PLO as the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people and urged everybody to support it as such.

[Question] What is the effect of the Amman Summit on the Arab situation and the solutions proposed for the Middle East problem? Do you expect the Arab disputes to lead to the freezing of plans for peaceful solutions?

[Answer] There is no doubt that the present differences between some of the Arab countries do not help to unify Arab action. But the resolutions and recommendations adopted at the Amman Summit and the resolve shown by the conferees go to show that Arab action will continue and that efforts will be exerted in order to win every support from either the Islamic countries, the socialist camp or Western Europe.

[Question] What is Morocco's opinion on giving King Husayn an Arab mandate to discuss the fate of the West Bank with President-elect Reagan and the West European countries?

[Answer] This question was not brought up before the Amman Summit nor was it discussed at the summit meetings. In fact, Arab action must take place in coordination with all the countries. One of the resolutions confirmed at the summit was that no decision on the Middle East crisis or the Palestine problem can be taken without total agreement at summit level. Generally every country takes whatever action it may deem suitable and useful for the Arab cause but such action must also be in total harmony with the plan agreed upon at the summit.

[Question] Does Morocco subscribe to the view that the Palestine autonomy negotiations between Egypt and Israel have failed and that the coming stage will be one of looking for a different solution for the Palestine problem?

[Answer] It has now become clear that the Camp David framework cannot be a suitable framework for solving the Middle East crisis and the Palestine problem, particularly after it has transpired that the Zionist enemy does not heed international resolutions and indeed continues to escalate his aggression as we have seen in the decision to annex Jerusalem and to continue to build settlements in the occupied territories. This goes to show that a deadend has been reached and that positive action must be taken to force Israel to implement the natural solution, which is based on withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967, including holy Jerusalem, and guaranteeing the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. Any Arab or international action that can be taken now must take this into consideration.

[Question] Did King Hassan II's refusal to attend the Amman Summit personally have anything to do with the Arab differences?

[Answer] King Hassan's personal circumstances made it difficult for him to attend the summit. But Morocco is committed to all the summit resolutions; it participated in drawing them up and will seek to implement them.

CSO: 4402

NATION 'ENDORSES' ARAB SUMMIT 'ACTION PLAN'

LD051623 Casablanca LE MATIN in French 27 Nov 80 pp 1, 5

[MAP report: "Morocco Reaffirms Its Immutable Commitment to the Defense of the Rights of the Fighting Palestinian People"]

[Text] Amman, 27 November--Prime Minister and Justice Minister Maati Bouabid, who is representing his majesty King Hassan II, who also wishes you success and hopes that our work will enable the Arab nation to fulfill its desire for glory and dignity.

The Moroccan delegation has the honor of expressing its cordial and sincere thanks to his majesty King Husayn, the government and the fraternal people of the kingdom of Jordan, who are heroically resisting along the line of confrontation with Zionist enemy, for their hospitality and cordial welcome which stems from the authentic Arab traditions of the noble Jordanian people so attached to the values of the Arab nation.

While participating in this conference, the Moroccan delegation fully realizes the gravity of the period through which the Arab nation is passing in the face of the challenge presented by the Zionist entity, which is pursuing its policy of settlements in Palestine and occupied Arab territories and wants to impose a policy of fait accompli by declaring that Jerusalem is its eternal and indivisible capital, thus defying the Arab and Islamic nation and showing contempt for international opinion.

Morocco, which has always worked in support of the Palestinian cause and holy Jerusalem and has mobilized all its potential and energies for this cause, reaffirms that, with its enormous energies and great potential the Arab nation is capable of facing up to the challenge, reasserting Arab rights, closing its ranks, mobilizing all its potentialities and overcoming its divergences and marginal problems.

We are pleased to express the Moroccan delegation's complete satisfaction with the results achieved at the preparatory meeting of foreign ministers and with the draft document which they submitted to us, which includes a joint Arab action plan for facing up to Zionist aggression and liberating holy Jerusalem and the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

The document has restated the Arab nation's unchanged stance which was adopted at the Seventh Arab Summit in Rabat and confirmed at the Baghdad and Tunis conferences, especially with respect to the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Zionist conflict. Morocco, whose sovereign is chairman of the Jerusalem Committee, reaffirms its immutable commitment to the defense of the rights of the fighting Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent state on their territories, just as it reaffirms its support for Arab countries with a view to liberating Palestine, Jerusalem and all the occupied territories.

Morocco, whose policy is based on the principle of solidarity and mutual support and whose sovereign, his majesty King Hassan II, participated in the preparation of the Arab solidarity charter at the Casablanca Summit, observes with concern the atmosphere prevailing on the Arab scene and firmly believes in the need to close Arab ranks in order to face the Zionist challenge. It expresses its determination to mobilize, as usual, all its material and human potential in support of the vital cause of liberating Palestine, Jerusalem and the occupied Arab territories.

Despite the fact that it is situated far away, Morocco believes itself to be at the center of the confrontation and is constantly prepared to defend Palestine, the occupied Arab territories and any Arab state whose sovereignty or territorial integrity is threatened.

At a stage where all the potentialities of the Arab nation must be mobilized to defend its existence, we can see that fraternal Iraq, whose people and armed forces have always defended Arab causes, has been obliged to engage in warfare in order to defend its policy, its rights and its territorial integrity.

We feel sure that the intensification of contacts with many countries throughout the world and, especially, the EC and the Vatican, with a view to persuading them to change their attitude to our cause, will contribute to the triumph of Arab rights.

With this end in mind, his majesty King Hassan II has, as you know, established contacts with several heads of state and will soon visit some European capitals on behalf of Islamic countries to explain Arab and Islamic views on the Palestinian question in general and Jerusalem in particular.

The Arab action in this sphere, which has developed and now enjoys the support of Islamic countries as a whole, makes us feel proud, and this is why the Moroccan delegation insists on the need for cooperation between the Arab League and the Islamic Conference Organization.

Your majesty and conference chairman, your majesties, your highnesses and excellencies.

The Moroccan delegation endorses the joint Arab action plan for facing up to the Zionist enemy. Morocco believes in the need to strengthen Arab-African cooperation and European-Arab dialogue in order to increase African and European support for Arab causes.

With reference to this, the establishment of three-way talks among the Arab world, Africa and the EC will help to obtain more support for our cause.

Arab countries are able to make such three-way cooperation positive with a view to making their rights prevail and protecting their interests.

We again express our hope that this conference will represent yet another step toward a consolidation of joint Arab action and the achievement of unity among Arabs, because unless we achieve this we will be unable to face the Zionist challenge and the circumstances under which the Arab nation is living at present.

Morocco, which believes that the problem of Palestine and Jerusalem concerns the entire Arab nation irrespective of any other considerations, is conscious of its responsibilities.

While regretting the absence of certain Arab countries, Morocco takes the view that assuming responsibilities means continually facing up to the existing situation unflinchingly and calmly with a view to achieving the objectives desired by the Arab nation, rather than shirking our duties.

CSO: 4400

TANGIER COLLOQUIUM ON EUROPEAN-AFRICAN LINK-UP

Rabat L'OPINION in French 5 Nov 80 p 7

[Text] The proposal to unite Europe and Africa by building a fixed link across the Strait of Gibraltar moved ahead in the thinking of engineers, economists, jurists, and politicians from a score of countries who just met in a colloquium in Tanger from 30 October to 1 November.

This idea has been felt a haunting one on both sides of the Strait since 1869, when Laurent Valdeuil presented the plan for a tunnel. It came up again in 1956 when the Spanish minister of public works revealed a plan for a suspension bridge. A new impetus was given it in June 1979, during the visit of King Juan Carlos: the Spanish sovereign and His Majesty the King Hassan II mentioned the proposal in their discussions.

Since then, there have been numerous meetings of Spanish and Moroccan experts, a joint commission has been created, and a joint venture company has been commissioned to study it.

The Tangier colloquium was the occasion for a review of the numerous problems to be met in preparation and realization of a project that is practically unprecedented in the world.

The depths greater than 500 meters at the place where the Strait is most narrow (15 kilometers) have led specialists to opt for a crossing route that is 28 km long in a part of the Strait where the maximum depth is less than 350 meters.

Such a depth, however, poses colossal problems: the pillars of a suspension bridge should measure more than 700 meters. The water pressure on the walls of a tunnel set on the bottom would reach 350 tons per square meter. A sunken tunnel should be at a depth of 400 meters below sea level and measure 45 kilometers.

It could, however, benefit from the experience of the Japanese engineers, some of whom were in Tangier, and who are presently completing at Seikan a railroad tunnel 54 km long, of which 23 km is under the sea at a depth of 240 m.

Other solutions have been proposed: a floating tunnel, anchored on the bottom by cales [translation unknown] or kept on the surface by enormous buoys, or even a suspended bridge whose pier would be built on submerged buoys.

The Inventor of the Talgo Train Proposes A Dam

But the most original solution is proposed by an 86-year-old Spanish engineer, Alejandro Golcochea Omar, inventor of the Talgo train. Reversing the assumptions of the problem, he believes that the real problem 20 or 50 years from now will not be so much traffic as energy. He has found the answer: a dam across the Strait.

On its top could go trains, trucks, cars and pedestrians. Two passages would be left open for ships. With its 1,600 turbines activated by the current caused by the one meter difference in the level of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, this dam would more than cover the energy needs of Spain and Morocco.

By comparison with the other solutions, the dam would have the advantage, according to the man who conceived it, of being able to be financed by private funds owing to the revenues accruing from the electricity produced.

Presented differently in Tangier, this simple but very 21st century solution nevertheless was skeptically received by numerous participants.

Petrodollars

But it certainly seems that the biggest problem to be resolved will be that of financing: some \$2.5 billion will have to be found. There was repeated talk on this occasion of Arab petrodollars and of trilateral projects involving Arab financing, technicians from the developed countries, and the manpower of the developing country, which is Morocco.

The realization of such a project, whatever it might be, will also pose problems of international law tied to the circulation of ships in the Strait as well as other matters.

Here and now, and this is doubtless one of the objectives of His Majesty the King, the proposed fixed link across the Strait of Gibraltar has had the effect of bringing closer relations between Spain and Morocco. (AFP)

The Recommendations: First Look at the Law of the Sea

The Tangier colloquium, noting that the permanent link-up of Europe and Africa would make feasible the development of cooperation between the two continents, ask the competent international organizations, and especially the United Nations, to support the project, and more especially asks the economic commissions for Africa and for Europe of the United Nations to cooperate in a study of the proposal, and particularly as it concerns present traffic in the region and the Mediterranean and the effects of this European-African link-up on this traffic, and recommends the creation of a joint commission to examine the following questions:

- 1) The juridical status of the marine space in the Strait, and particularly:
 - a) To examine the present state of actual international law;
 - b) The respective laws of the two nations bordering on the Strait;
 - c) The reconciliation of the respective bodies of national law and the taking of a joint position at regional and international levels;
- 2) The impact of the juridical regime on the realization of the proposed link-up;
 - a) Study of the juridical impact of realizing the project with respect to the construction phase and also to the operational phase.
- 3) Preparation of a complete proposed code with deals in the broadest way possible with the juridical problems of the link-up, with respect particularly to:
 - a) Navigation and its juridical regime;
 - b) The security of the structures;
 - c) Problems of liability and damages;
 - d) Violations and sanctions.
- 4) The elaboration of a proposed bilateral convention on the question of the European-African link-up.

The creation of joint working groups which could be joined by international authorities for the collection of the physical, environmental, and technical data pertinent to the project. In order to do this:

- 1) Collect and summarize the existing data in order that it can be used for specific studies of the project.
- 2) Obtain geological, geographical, geotechnical and meteorological data and make investigations by methods and means of land, air, and sea observations to determine the physical and environmental conditions of the Strait;
- 3) Make investigations by stages in order that the data obtained can be optimized;
- 4) Acquire from bodies of experts all the data that can bear on the study, conception, and realization of types of possible structures for the fixed link-up;
- 5) Resume and deepen the examination of different solutions proposed during the colloquium, and see their respective possibilities for being applied in the context of the proposed link;

Notes with lively satisfaction the interest shown by the Commission of the European Communities and manifest by the presence of its two representatives, asks this commission to continue to follow attentively the development of the projects undertaken and to bring to bear its support to the efforts deployed to move forward the realization of this great project.

Next, Mohammed Kabbaj, president of the joint commission, read the text of a communication from the participants to His Majesty the King Hassan II.

Taking part in the closing session were the minister of state in charge of tourism, the secretary general of the transport ministry, the secretary general of the ministry of infrastructure and national promotion, Mr Bourl, the ambassador of His Majesty the King to Madrid, the ambassador of Spain to Rabat, Alfonso De La Serna, as well as several other personalities.

A Key to the Evolution of the Peoples of the Mediterranean

"The Strait of Gibraltar in the geological and oceanographical evolution of the western Mediterranean Sea," "Means and Methods of Observation at Sea," "Economic and Financial Profitability," "Evaluation of economic repercussions on Europe, Africa, and the Arab world," as well as on "the participation of private enterprise in the fixed link-up" were among the principal themes discussed on Friday.

Thus in the course of the meeting of the commission chaired by Abdellatif B. Addeljalil, rector of Mohammed V University of Rabat, Mr Suter made a presentation on "the geology of the arc of Gibraltar." In his presentation, the speaker, after having gone over the geographical situation of the Strait of Gibraltar, indicated that the subterranean tunnel which could be envisaged in the proposed permanent link-up between Europe and Africa would be placed in the most westerly, and most external parts of this disposition [sic].

He also drew attention to the fact that possible technical difficulties could arise in the traversing of the terrains separating the two great groupings: "Marly-schistose" and "Flysch: sandy-marly." [sic]

The presentation of Mr Suter was followed by that of Andres Maldonado of the Spanish Institute of "Jaime Almera" which dealt with the geological evolution of the Strait of Gibraltar.

The Spanish speaker in particular indicated that the Strait of Gibraltar plays a basic role in the evolution of the Mediterranean Sea. "The Strait of Gibraltar represents a cultural, scientific, and economic challenge as well as a key to the evolution of the Mediterranean and the peoples in its environs," Mr Maldonado concluded.

For his part, Mr Jean Gaz-li made a presentation on meteorological conditions, in which he particularly stressed that the geographic configuration of the southern Spain and northern Morocco imposes on the winds a dominant east-west directionality over the Strait of Gibraltar and the sea of Alboran [sic].

In turn, Ahmed Bensari, chief of national meteorological services, gave a general survey of the same subject.

Speaking during the meeting of the commission, chaired by Mr Bensenda, director of the Moroccan Foreign Trade Bank (BMCE), Jose Luis Garcia of the Spanish delegation made a presentation on the "economic and financial assessment" of the proposed Europe-Africa link.

In his presentation, the Spanish speaker made an economic and financial analysis of the project starting with estimates of cost and future traffic made by various experts. These analyses, he said, will be aimed at identifying the time and the conditions in which the project would be profitable from the point of view of private enterprise.

For his part, Abdelghani Sbihi, president-director general of the Morocco Transport Company and vice-president of the Association of Moroccan Economists dealt in his presentation with "economic repercussions on Europe, Africa, and the Arab world."

Mr Abdelghani Sbihi particularly spoke of the Moroccan road networks and of realization of the fixed link between Europe and Africa, which, he stated, constitutes an historic event.

The Moroccan delegate on the other hand, gave a general rundown on Morocco's rail network, and mentioned, in connection with the question of Morocco's roads, that Morocco has adhered to most of the international conventions regulating this mode of transport, and cited as examples the Accords of Brussels and Hamburg, the convention of Berne, the convention of Athens, as well as the convention of Geneva on international road transit (TIR).

This presentation was followed by a commentary made by Abdelghani Dalli on the financing of the permanent link between Europe and Africa over the Strait of Gibraltar.

Following these various presentations, the speakers successively responded to various questions posed by the audience.

A Vital Project

The Spanish minister of transport and communications, Jose Luis Alvarez, arrived Monday late afternoon in Madrid on his return from Tangier, where he participated in the Tangier colloquium.

Mr Alvarez said that this colloquium approved the creation by the Spanish and Moroccan governments of two companies capitalized at 50 million pesetas and was the occasion for a contact and an exchange of points of view among the experts.

The Spanish minister also indicated that projects of this kind serve to promote better relations between Spain and Morocco and to make it possible for the two countries to have joint aspirations regarding a subject as vital for Europe and Africa as the construction of a fixed link across Gibraltar.

Jose Alvarez, finally, indicated that Morocco and Spain would like to see other countries and international organizations contribute to the realization of this project which will require resources beyond the scope of Spain and Morocco.

9516
CSO: 4400

MOROCCO

MOROCCO SEEKING TO EXPLOIT PHOSPHATES AS ENERGY SOURCE

Rabat L'OPINION in French 8 Nov 80 pp 1,8

[Article by Stephen Hughes of the Reuter agency]

[Text] Morocco foresees becoming the first Arab or African country to extract oil from its bituminous shale, an undertaking for which it is disposed to invest nearly \$1 billion over the next 5 years.

Like all developing countries that must import oil, Morocco is hit hard by the increases in the price of black gold. The energy bill this year is expected to be 5 billion dirhams (or \$1.2 billion) which represents one-third of all imports.

To pay for it, Morocco must in large part count on its phosphates industry, the pillar of its economy. But despite the increased income from phosphates this year--from \$32 to \$52 a ton--the export earnings from phosphates and their derivatives do not cover the energy bill. It is anticipated that the phosphates industry will only bring Morocco 400 million dirhams in 1980, and this represents about half of all exports.

Facing the eventuality of still higher oil prices, as a consequence of the Iraqi-Iranian conflict and other factors, Morocco determined that the investments in bituminous shale were becoming an economic necessity. During a Moroccan-American conference which took place in Rabat in October, the experts said that the expenses of extracting oil from the Moroccan shales would be almost equivalent to the costs of oil exploitation in the North Sea.

The minister of energy and mines, Moussa Saadi, told the conference that Morocco intended to invest 3.3 billion dirhams (\$962 million) in shale exploitation during the course of the next five-year plan (1981-1985). The Moroccan Government, he continued, envisages the construction of 4 or 5 electric power plants that will be supplied by the oil from the shale. The first would enter into operation in 1984. Production should rise to 5 billion kilowatt-hours per year, or one-third of all the electricity needs of the country. In the first phase, investments will be 1.5 billion dirhams.

The first projects will be located in the Timahdit deposits (Middle-Atlas) 90 km south of Fez. Reserves there are estimated at 20 billion tons, with an average of 64 liters of oil per ton.

There exist a dozen other commercially exploitable deposits in the country. The largest are found in the Tarfaya region on the Atlantic coast near Western Sahara. According to preliminary assessments, the Tarfaya reserves are on the order of 200 billion tons of shale, representing on average 56 liters per ton.

The products derived from the new industry could include sulphides, large quantities of which are imported for the phosphate-based chemical industry, ammonia for manufacture of fertilizers, and bituminous waste products that can be used in the cement industry.

Beyond being a pioneer in the commercial processing of bituminous shale, Morocco also spends \$90 million for oil prospecting, both off-shore and in the ground. Production from several small deposits reached 18,600 tons of crude oil last year and 75 million cubic meters of natural gas.

Simultaneously, the government has undertaken a program of energy conservation and augmented retail prices on petroleum products. A new center, established in Marrakech, is also supposed to do studies on solar energy and other renewable energy resources.

The international experts are looking favorably on Morocco's new energy policy. The president of the World Bank, Robert McNamara himself, recently approved a loan of \$50 million for the financing of the new oil resources.

9516
CSO: 4400

BRIEFS

FRG COOPERATION ACCORD SIGNED--Rabat, 5 Dec--Abdelhaq Tazi, secretary of state for cooperation, and Dr Walter Jesser, FRG ambassador to Morocco, signed a financial cooperation agreement between the Moroccan and FRG governments in Rabat on Thursday [14 December]. This agreement was reached after 3 days of meetings by the Moroccan-German Intergovernmental Financial and Technical Cooperation Committee and aims to contribute to Morocco's economic and social development. It makes provision for a loan of DM 75 million (around 150 million dirhams) in 1980. It also makes provision for carrying out irrigation projects in the Neckor valley, projects to supply Al Hoceima with drinking water and agricultural development projects for the Loukkos region. In addition the agreement deals with aspects of technical cooperation between Morocco and the FRG for 1980-1981. [Excerpt] [MAP report: "Financial Cooperation Agreement Between Morocco and Germany Signed in Rabat"] [LD191111 Casablanca LE MATIN in French 5 Dec 80 p 5]

CSO: 4400

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

DISSIDENT DELEGATION ARRIVES IN MUSCAT

LD191640 Muscat Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Dec 80 EA

[Excerpts] A delegation of the National Rally of Nationalist Forces in Southern Yemen arrived in the country today. Led by his excellency 'Abd al-Qawi Makkwi, secretary general of the National Rally, the delegation accompanying his excellency includes [name indistinct], deputy secretary general; Muhammad 'Ali Maytham, assistant secretary general; Muhammad Salim 'Ali, secretary of the liaison office; and ('Abd al-'Aziz al-Kathiri), secretary of the information and culture office.

His excellency the secretary general of the National Rally in Southern Yemen in a statement upon his arrival at the airport said: Our people in Southern Yemen have today become a prey of international communism. In fact, we live in a great disaster. He stressed that the danger threatens all the Arab states without exception. It is regrettable that many Arab states do not realize this cancerous danger. He added: Our cause is no less important than the cause of Afghanistan, for our country is under Soviet occupation which represents a new type of colonialism which we regard as more dangerous than the previous British colonialism.

He asked the Arab and Islamic states to be attentive to the cause of the people in Southern Yemen and to draw up a strategic plan to face this danger and purge Southern Yemen of international communism. Commenting on Leonid Brezhnev's proposal concerning the Gulf area, 'Abd al-Qawi Makkwi said the proposal is a cover for the expansionist colonialist policy being practiced by the Soviets in the area.

He added: If he is truthful, we want him to quit our territories, and Afghanistan and Ethiopia too. But this tale is sheer propaganda and [word indistinct].

On the opposition rally, which he leads, he said: The rally was formed several months ago. It includes [word indistinct] nationalist elements. He pointed out that the rally intends to form a government-in-exile. Rather, it is a nationalist government and we want to form it inside as soon as we can get any (?territory) there.

CSO: 4802

COMMUNIQUE ON FOREIGN MINISTER'S TALKS IN ITALY

LD211604 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1315 GMT 21 Dec 80

['Saudi-Italian Joint Communique'--SPA headline]

[Text] Riyadh, 21 Dec (SPA)--At the invitation of his excellency Italian Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo his royal highness Foreign Minister Sa'ud al-Faysal paid an official visit to Italy 19-20 December 1980. During the visit his royal highness met his excellency Italian President Alessandro Pertini, Prime Minister Arnaldo Forlani, his excellency Minister of Foreign Trade Enrico Manca and the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies.

His royal highness was warmly received--a reflection of the ties of cooperation and traditional relations which characterize the two countries' relations. His royal highness's visit was aimed at the deepening and consolidation of the links between the two countries in particular and between the Arab world and Europe in general. Talks between the two sides centered on the role played by each in its region in the political, economic and cultural spheres as well as bilateral relations.

Those who took part in the talks on the Saudi side were: his excellency Kahlid al-Nasir, his majesty's ambassador to Italy; Shaykh Ma'mun Khayri Qabbani, head of the western section at the foreign ministry; his excellency Hassan Ashraf, ambassador at the foreign ministry; Dr Nizar 'Abid Madani, adviser at the foreign ministry; and Ahmad Abd al-Aziz [word indistinct], third secretary at the foreign ministry.

Those who took part in the talks on the Italian side were: Walter Gardini, head of the political affairs at the foreign ministry; Solera, Italian ambassador in Jidda; Maurizio Bucci, head of the economic affairs section at the foreign ministry; Mr Giovanni [words indistinct] a (Vali Darkira); plenipotentiary at the foreign ministry; and (Anzio Kapiolot), head of the press section at the foreign ministry.

The ministers' talks also covered the main political problems in the international arena on which their views were to a great extent in agreement in accordance with the objectives of their countries, those of fruitful cooperation and its development among nations. The two ministers agreed on the urgent need to find a just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including

Jerusalem, and the Palestinian people's exercising its right to self-determination, a matter which achieves peace, stability and security in the region. Both sides stressed the special importance of Jerusalem and the inadmissibility of any unilateral action aimed at changing the features of the city. The Italian foreign minister explained the outlines and main elements of program of action drawn up by the EEC council meeting in Luxembourg on 1-2 December in implementation of the 13 June Venice declaration. His royal highness Sa'ud al-Faysal explained the main points of the Arab attitude as outlined by the Arab summit meetings.

Both sides expressed anxiety over other conflicts in the world and stressed the need to respect the UN charter. In this context they confirmed their determination to support the implementation of those principles at international gatherings in order to maintain peace. The two foreign ministers reviewed the resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the Islamic Conference Organization and the EEC, all condemning Soviet interference in Afghanistan, a matter which constitutes a violation of basic UN principles, against an independent, Islamic, neutral and nonaligned country.

In view of the continued Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan both sides renewed their confirmation of the need for a complete withdrawal of Soviet forces and the Afghan people's right to self-determination without foreign interference. Both sides also reviewed the international [word indistinct] problems, confirmed the need for control of inflation and for increased international cooperation, for technological development in order to find alternative energy sources and also confirmed the need to preserve available natural resources. They also agreed to support international efforts aimed at the establishment of a new international economic order. They stressed anew the importance of cooperation and consultations among states over the main economic problems and aid to developing countries.

The Saudi side expressed appreciation of the constructive role played by Italy at international levels for the achievement of those objectives. Also the Italian side expressed its appreciation of the role played by the kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a major oil producer and as a big financial force. Both sides confirmed the importance of their economic and trade relations and their determination to develop them to their mutual benefit. They thus decided that the Saudi-Italian mixed committee should meet as soon as possible and to hold definite contacts between public and private establishments in both countries.

His royal highness Sa'ud al-Faysal extended the condolences of his majesty's government to the victims of the recent earthquake in Italy. The Italian foreign minister expressed his government's gratitude for the solidarity shown by the Saudi authorities on this occasion.

His royal highness Sa'ud al-Faysal expressed his thanks for the warm welcome accorded to him and the delegation accompanying him during the visit. His royal highness invited Emilio Colombo to pay an official visit to Saudi Arabia; the invitation was accepted and the date will be set later.

SAUDI ARABIA

BRIEFS

OIL MINISTER REPLACED--Paris, 20 Dec (JANA)--The French magazine LE JEUNE AFRIQUE said yesterday that Ahmad Zaki Yamani, who has been a minister of oil in Saudi Arabia for the last 20 years, will be replaced by Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the present Saudi minister of foreign affairs. [Text] (LD200956 Tripoli JANA in English 0828 GMT 20 Dec 80)

CSO: 4820

TUNISIA

GDR'S FISCHER COMMENTS ON VISIT

LD181549 Tunis L'ACTION in French 6 Dec 80 p 6

[Unattributed report: "Tunisia and the GDR intend to ensure that Their Cooperation Becomes an Example of Understanding and Respect"]

[Text] Yesterday GDR Foreign Minister Oskar Fischer gave a press conference at the Tunis Hilton Hotel during which he discussed the results of the visit which he has just paid to Tunisia at the invitation of Foreign Minister Hassan Belkhoja.

First of all Mr Fischer stated that this is the first time that a GDR foreign minister has paid an official visit to Tunisia. He emphasized that he is very pleased with the results of his visit which has enabled him to have fruitful and constructive talks with Tunisian leaders. Our discussions, he added, took place in a friendly atmosphere marked by frankness and objectiveness.

"I was received," he stated, "by President Bourguiba who greatly impressed me by the very kind message which he addressed to Mr Honecker, Socialist Unity Party Central Committee secretary general and GDR state council chairman, and the East German people and also by the views which he expressed on the development of relations between the two countries.

"I also had talks with Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali, Foreign Minister Hassan Belkhoja, National Economy Minister Abdelaziz Lasram, Planning and Finance Minister Mansour Moalla and the governor of Bizerta where I went to place a wreath at the martyrs monument. Furthermore I had a very friendly talk with Arab League Secretary General Chadli Klibi."

Drawing conclusions from his visit, Oskar Fischer stated that Tunisia and the GDR have very friendly mutual relations and that they are inspired by a desire to further develop these relations which benefit and will continue to benefit the two countries. Both the GDR and Tunisia will make efforts to pursue and develop these relations in a spirit of mutual understanding and confidence. As two states belonging to different social systems, the GDR and Tunisia intend to give by their cooperation an example of understanding and respect and to thus help to reduce tensions in international relations by providing a concrete framework for peaceful coexistence.

Oskar Fischer stated in addition that Tunisia's and the GDR's views coincide with respect to major international problems, namely, peace, detente, security through disarmament and the struggle against any form of domination, racism and apartheid.

Furthermore, the two sides have agreed on the need to pursue and intensify their efforts with a view to seeking additional common denominators in order to develop their cooperation.

Observing, furthermore, that the volume of exchanges between Tunisia and the GDR has increased tenfold in the past 7 years, the GDR foreign minister emphasized that this constitutes a solid base for future joint projects envisaged by the two countries. In particular, these projects will involve the supply of farming equipment and machinery to Tunisia. The Tunisian-East German talks also related to the agro-combines provided for in Tunisia's sixth development plan and to prospecting and exploiting lignite in Tunisia. Cooperation between the two countries is also likely to extend to the sphere of railroads, especially with respect to the supply of signalling and safety equipment. The two countries also intend to develop their cooperation in the sphere of mechanical construction.

In conclusion Fischer emphasized the need for the two sides to do everything in their power to implement and concretize the agreements concluded as a result of his visit to Tunisia.

CSO: 4400

MESTIRI OPPOSITION FACTION NEWSPAPER

LD151105 Paris LE MONDE in French 6 Dec 80 p 8

[Dispatch by Michel Deure: "Mr Mestiri Publishes a Weekly Claiming 'Responsible Opposition'"]

[Text] Tunis--The first issue of the weekly MOUSTAQBAL (THE FUTURE) published by Ahmed Mestiri and members of the executive committee of the Opposition Movement of Social Democrats [MDS] was on sale on Monday, 1 December. In an introductory editorial Mestiri writes that his government, which is "democratic, socialist and Arabo-Muslim in identify," pursues "responsible opposition concerned with all the country's problems and believing in the rules of alternation in government." The general tone of the articles included in this first issue is fairly favorable to the policy of easing tension which the government has been following for several months but it also reveals some reservations about the future with regard to both choices and policies.

MOUSTAQBAL, which will soon be duplicated by a French-language publication, comes in the wake of the weeklies AR-RAY (OPINION) and DEMOCRATIC published by former friends of Mestiri who have been in disagreement with him since he expressed his intention to form a political party in June 1978. All are now claiming the right to the movement's initials.

However the MDS--with its two factions--is still at present the only opposition group to have obtained permission to publish newspapers. The Tunisian Communists have been submitting a request to the Interior Ministry since 1977 and have in fact just submitted it again; the leaders of the Popular Unity Movement have also been waiting for more than 2 years and the Muslim group has still not received permission to resume publication of its two publications AL MOUJTAMAA (SOCIETY), which suspended for 3 months 1 year ago, and AL MAARIFA (KNOWLEDGE). The independent weekly LE PHARE, however, which was suspended for 3 months last summer could, it is thought, start publication again soon.

CSO: 4400

PREMIER LAUDS ECONOMIC RESULTS OF AMMAN SUMMIT

LD051437 Tunis L'ACTION in French 28 Nov 80 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "On His Return From Amman, Mr Mzali Informed the Head of State of the Arab Summit's Work and Decisions"]

[Excerpt] Speaking about the Amman Summit's results, the prime minister made the following comment on the political section of the final communique: "The achievement which I would like to stress is that, for the first time in the history of Arab summits, the Arab sovereigns and heads of state reached agreement on an economic strategy to develop the Arab world--a strategy which could reduce the existing disparities which are a legacy from the past--and this bears witness to their feeling of solidarity and their conviction of the need to enable the least advanced Arab countries to join the ranks of the developed countries, in the knowledge that we have a common destiny and that no Arab country can make progress and attain a high level of development if other states remain underdeveloped."

The prime minister continued: "This is also the first time that Arab consensus has been achieved on a development contract for 1980-1990. Five countries, namely Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait pledged to make annual contributions to the Arab world's development totaling \$500 million, in other words almost 200 million dinars."

This package constitutes a minimum threshold which can be increased according to capacity to carry out projects.

Mohamed Mzali stressed that some people might take up the statements made in some European newspapers and retort that this sum is minimal--"a mistake; this package constitutes a positive step because the essential point is not how much money is given but the financing and carrying out of projects," the prime minister said, welcoming this decision, which meant that the 11th summit did not indulge in political extremes and impassioned speeches but produced a consensus on the strategy which the sovereigns and heads of state promise to adopt. The prime minister concluded: "I would like to express my admiration for the efforts made by Jordan in planning this summit. All the delegations and observers were unanimous in asserting that this summit was a success."

"On my own account and on behalf of the delegation which accompanied me I would also like to thank the Jordanian Government and people for the warmth of their welcome and for the esteem and regard they show for Tunisia and its president. I hope that my participation and that of my colleagues in this summit will have served my country and the Arab nation."

CSO: 4400

RESHUFFLE REFLECTS ONGOING LIBERALIZATION

LD281055 Paris LE MONDE in French 5 Dec 80 p 6

[Dispatch by Michel Deure: "Tunisia: Government Reshuffle Reflects Openness Policy"]

[Text] Tunis--On Wednesday, 3 December, President Bourguiba carried out a government reshuffle (see LE MONDE 4 December) which seems to lie within the context of the openness policy adopted following Mr Mohamed Mzali's appointment as prime minister in April. This trend toward a liberalization of the regime, which has been apparent for several months in the reorganization of the Destourian Socialist Party [PSD] and more independent trade union activity, is now reflected also in the government with the return to the cabinet of Messrs Tahar Belkhodja and Beji Caid Essebsi as information minister and minister attached to the prime minister.

Mr Tahar Belkhodja was relieved of his functions as interior minister on 23 December 1977, having publicly opposed the policy of steadfastness adopted toward the trade unions by the government then led by Hedi Nouri, which led to the 26 January 1978 uprisings. The target for the advocates of an inflexible policy who, aware that he still held the respect of the Carthage Palace, wanted to see him tried for "treason," Mr Belkhodja was deprived of all responsibilities for just over 2 years. It was only following Mr Nouri's illness and resignation that he began his return to public life by accepting in March the post of Tunisian ambassador to Bonn, which he has held until now.

The appointment of Mr Beji Caid Essebsi, whose precise tasks as minister are not yet fully known, is equally significant. Following his expulsion from the PSD in 1974 for protesting against the lack of democracy in the country, he was active in the ranks of the Social Democrats' Liberal Opposition Movement (MDS). But, unlike some of his friends, who are still demanding authorization to form a party, Mr Beji Caid Essebsi 9 months ago accepted President Bourguiba's offer for him to rejoin the PSD. Subsequently his return to government was postponed several times but a close associate of his, Mr Sadok Ben Jomaa, another MDS member, accepted the post of transport and communications minister back in April.

Another figure is joining the government: Mr Mezri Chekhir, a long time aide and former chef de cabinet of Mr Mzali, who has been granted the post of minister attached to the prime minister for administration reform and the civil service. He replaces Moncef Be Hadj Amor, who has been appointed housing minister.

Mr Mohamed Sayah, who held this post together with that of public works minister, retains only the latter post, but his activities will not be diminished since he has just begun drafting a new volume of the history of the national movement, on which he has been working for many years. Last, Mr Fouad Mebazaa, who is handing over the information ministry to Mr Belkhodja, remains cultural affairs minister.

CSO: 4400

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

BRIEFS

COMPLETION OF FACTORIES--Abu Dhabi, 3 Dec (WAM)--Work on a number of large factories and plants was completed during the last year and some of them have gone into production. Among these are, the Abu Dhabi flour mill, the gas liquefaction plant in Das Island, the Umm Al Nar refinery, the natural gas plant in Dubai, cement factories in Al Ain, Sharjah, Dubai and Ras al Khaimah and the Dubai aluminium smelter. Projects under construction and expected to start production in 1981 are Al Ruwais gas plant, Al Ruwais refinery and the Abu Dhabi caustic soda factory. Other projects under execution are the Umm Al Nar chlorine and salt factory at a cost of Dh400 million, Al Ruwais fertiliser plant at a cost of Dh856 million and the Fujairah cement factory at a cost of Dh20 million. [Text] [Abu Dhabi EMIRATES NEWS in English 4 Dec 80 p 3]

NATIONALIZATION OF EMIRTEL--Abu Dhabi, 9 Dec (WAM)--The Emirates Telecommunications Corporation will become fully nationally-owned with the remaining 20 percent of the shares held by the foreign company being offered for public subscription to citizens early next month. Communications Minister Mohamed Saeed al Mulla, who announced this, said a memorandum in this regard will be forwarded to the Council of Ministers. The minister pointed out that this new subscription will raise the share of nationals in the corporation's capital of Dh100 million to 40 percent, in implementation of President Sheikh Zayed's directive. The UAE government already holds 60 percent of the shares. Al Mulla said a new board would be set up for Emirtel under his chairmanship next month, consisting of six members representing governmental and four representing public subscribers. [Text] [Abu Dhabi EMIRATES NEWS in English 10 Dec 80 p 1]

SOVEREIGNTY OVER ISLANDS DEMANDS--New York, Monday--The United Arab Emirates renewed its demand for sovereignty over the three occupied Arab Islands, Abu Mousa, Greater and Lesser Tunbs. A press statement released by the UAE Permanent Representation to the United Nations today confirmed categorical rejection of any other sovereignty over the said Arab Islands. The statement, marking the 9th anniversary of the occupation by the Persians of these islands, stressed that a just and permanent peace cannot be achieved in the Arab Gulf Region unless the occupied Islands are returned to their legitimate owners. [Text] [Baghdad BAGHDAD OBSERVER in English 3 Dec 80 p 1]

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